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LITTLE THINGS.

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Deposited Dec. 27, 1845

Recorded Vol. 20. P. 488.

No. 144.

LITTLE THINGS.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "LETTERS FROM A SICK ROOM."  
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Written for the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and revised
by the Committee of Publication.



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BOSTON:

MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Depository, 13 Cornhill.

1845.

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LITTLE THINGS.

CHAPTER I.

A LITTLE book, made up of little things, seems to promise but small pleasure or profit to the reader; yet we are all ready to acknowledge how important are the effects which follow slight and almost imperceptible causes. "How great a fire a little matter kindleth," is a well known proverb, and it applies to all causes and effects, wherever we may trace them in the world.

A single spark of fire will, in a few hours, bury a city in ashes, and reduce thousands to poverty. An unintentional word or imprudent action, caught up by the tongue of slander, and spread abroad by the breath of envy, will ruin the reputation of the innocent,

wither the purest affections, and blight the fairest hopes. What trifling circumstances often change the whole course of life, turn the tide of ambition, and effect the destiny of an individual! Millions of people had seen apples fall to the earth, but to Newton alone it suggested the theory of gravitation, and the laws by which myriads of worlds perform their annual revolutions in glorious order about the sun as their common centre. Thousands of youths had witnessed the boiling of a tea-kettle, but the thinking mind of Fulton inferred from the lifted cover the wonderful power of steam, and the important results which would follow its application to the raising of ponderous weights, and the propelling of vessels.

An interesting occurrence is related by a living philosophical historian, concerning the influence of a diamond necklace in overturning a throne, producing a bloody revolution, kindling war and spreading devastation throughout the world. The unfortunate Marie Antoinette was offered, on the birth of her son, a necklace of immense value, which

she had the firmness to refuse, though she had long desired it. On the 15th of August, 1785, in the beginning of those troublous times ever memorable in the annals of France, a letter was sent to the king, stating, falsely, as it afterwards appeared, that it had been sent to her majesty. This intrigue revived all the old stories concerning the prodigality and extravagance of the court, which the economy of recent years had somewhat lulled into oblivion. Abbé Talleyrand, then a young man, but whose penetration nothing could escape, early discerned its importance. "Attend narrowly," said he, "to that miserable affair of the diamond necklace. I should be no way surprised if it overturned the throne." The authors of the wicked falsehood and malicious slander were afterwards discovered, and punished as they deserved, but the consequences produced by the excitement of the people on hearing this report of the selfishness of their queen, and her disregard for the welfare of her subjects, were not stayed. Thousands were starving in the streets of Paris, and this misery and wretch-

edness, as the people believed, was the effect of the cold-hearted prodigality of their sovereign and his ministers. They resolved to wrest the sceptre from him who only used it as the instrument of his own aggrandizement and gratification, and their ruin. Not long afterward their bloody purpose was accomplished. A king, whose only fault seemed to be his amiability, who sincerely desired the best good of his subjects, and was willing to make any sacrifice for the peace and happiness of his people, was beheaded by the infuriated populace. His lovely queen, and two other innocent members of the royal family, soon experienced the same fate. Rivers of blood flowed through the streets of the city, and the more noble and generous the heart of a victim, the more deeply was the dagger plunged in his bosom. We might go on to reflect upon the oppression and misery which overwhelmed not one nation only, but many, through the years which followed these days of horror, till France was again permitted to rest. We are not to say that this trifling occurrence was the cause of all these

effects, for previously there had been great excitement, many fearful forebodings, and much real ground for complaint; but there was a probability of their being hushed, of grievances being redressed, had not wicked, designing spirits seized this and used it as a means to convert order into disorder, to stir up discontent and rebellion, to produce a whirlpool which should engulf all who stood a niche above them in the temple of fame, or who possessed more wealth, power or influence, thus withholding from *them* the goad of tyranny and the rod of despotism.

We might trace our own revolution to the desire of avaricious rulers and ministers to add to wealth which was already burdensome, to extend an empire which was already unwieldy, and to increase a power which was just ready to be crushed by its own weight. We might glance over the earth, and find events so insignificant as scarcely to be noticeable, silently working their unseen way, till some mighty change is effected on which a world gazes with astonishment. But I do not intend to wander from the firesides of our own

valleys, to find the little things from which I hope to derive instruction as I set them down in this little book. Very trifling indeed they may seem, but nothing is unimportant which directly or indirectly affects the morals of the community ; any thing that engenders misery in one home, awakens joy in one heart, or fills another with heaviness, is deserving of consideration, and vastly important to those whose lives are made up of trifles, and who expect while they live in this world to have their happiness or misery hourly, daily, and seriously affected by the most trivial occurrences.

To woman there is not even the hope of exciting scenes in the world without ; hers is an appointed, daily, monotonous routine ; a life of seclusion, toil and self-denial, without the praise, which is so grateful to those who are struggling, of having done any thing worth naming. "Let my child not be a girl," said the Indian mother of the prairie, "for very sorrowful is the lot of woman." A celebrated and able writer maintains, that the duties and obligations of the two sexes

could not be so different, else there would have been given us two gospels. Most assuredly do I believe that more gentleness, meekness, long-suffering and forbearance, would add greatly to the beauty of man's character, and make him more nearly what God would approve. But from physical constitutions so entirely different, why should we not look for different pursuits, for a different intellectual, and I had almost said, moral nature? That each of these *is* different, from some cause, is most manifest. Setting aside the qualities and occupations which war and governments demand, setting aside even extensive commercial speculations, in the boasted theoretic communities, I suppose some kind of trade and bartering must be carried on; at least the fields must be cultivated, and their products made ready for the consumer, and this requires great physical strength; and who of us would exchange places with those who go forth to toil in the burning sun, to mend the highways and the hedges, and subdue the brute to be the willing slave of man? Who would willingly

subject herself to this exposure, and make herself liable to the temptations of this unlimited sphere, for the sake of any reward?

It is asked, "What are the temptations? We are exposed to no dangers but those which those stronger than ourselves scatter in our way. When we go out we need the presence of those whom we *can* trust, to protect us against those whom we cannot." This is true, but I have yet to learn that any "community" or artificial laws will take from man the disposition to deceive and seduce, or from the base woman the propensity to flatter and decoy. These are passions which have had their lodging-place in the heart ever since our first parents fell, and nothing but the grace of God can ever eradicate them. But they do not dwell in the heart of *man* alone; and we cannot be ever accusing him without often hearing the question, "Who was the first cause of our mutual degradation?" To our seclusion alone we owe all the superior moral excellence we can claim, and this is not a barrier so effectual that we are not daily pained by listening to stories of crimes

committed by those whom we would gladly screen from reproach.

That we are created inferior, and must ever be dependent, is a humiliating thought, and long do we rebel against the submission which such inferiority requires. But is it not better, by yielding, to enjoy the privileges of peace, when we positively know that rebellion will never bring any thing better than anarchy and confusion, and may possibly ensure tyranny and despotism.

The natural heart is at enmity against God, and not till he has subdued it are we ever willing to acknowledge God as Sovereign of the universe. We are never ready to say,

“Thy will be done,

Thy holy will, e'en though it cross my own.”

When we begin to reflect upon one of his attributes, and the judgments with which he visits his people, we involuntarily exclaim, “It is unjust, and we deserve not the punishment which the law pronounces, and which all must suffer who obey not every requirement, or

trust with unconditional faith and dependence in the merits of the Lamb that was slain to atone for the sins of a fallen world." When we dwell upon the misery and suffering which we see every where around us, how often do we hear the exclamation, from the lisping child to the man of hoary head, "Why was it ever permitted to enter the world?" But feelings like these do not banish it, nor even help to banish it. It is here, and we are here to overcome evil with good, and with all our discontent and restlessness we can never penetrate the mysterious counsels of the Almighty. We are told of a way of escape, a glorious way, by which we may enter the habitation of the holy, and after a weary pilgrimage on earth, sit down for ever with the blessed, the purchase of redeeming blood. Why, then, shall we not arise and be doing, and seek to save others as well as ourselves, instead of riveting their chains, and encouraging them to sit down and mourn over what cannot be helped,

"And blush at naught but sin, fear naught but God."

What would be thought of the drowning man, who had been cast into the deep waters, if he should say, "No voluntary act of mine placed me in this perilous situation, and I am not bound to make any effort for my safety?" Submission is the most trying ordeal through which the human heart is called to pass.

Woman was first in the transgression ; and for this reason a more terrible curse was pronounced upon her than upon man, who afterwards sinned. It has been suggested that he yielded to a much slighter temptation, for all the arts of Satan were called forth to seduce the woman, while a few words were sufficient to bring the tempting fruit to the lips of her lord, unless she was superior in cunning to the arch-deceiver himself. But the fact that she first yielded is not to be denied. We may shrink from the unwelcome truth, but the weight of the dreadful curse is upon us, and we go groaning under it, from the day of our birth to the day of death. No rebellion or denial will shake it off, or relieve us from one iota of its heaviness.

Through all the Old Testament we find man walking in darkness, and woman may be said as truly to have grovelled in the dust. She was elevated a little above the flocks and herds, and by the Jew valued for the same purposes as were his cattle. To possess any of her qualities was a disgrace, and rather would he plunge the dagger in his own bosom than have it said he died by her hand. At the dawning of the Christian era, light dawned upon her. Christ made her his companion, and she was honored by giving birth to the Lord of glory. She ever readily and faithfully ministered to his wants, "was last at his burial and first at his resurrection." Since then, in Christian countries, she has never been a slave, and is elevated just in proportion as the pure principles of Christ are diffused in the heart and life. Two gospels have not been given to us, but in the blessed one which we have, we are often reminded that woman was first in the transgression, and must ever be subject to man. Various forms and duties are pointed out as proper for him and not proper for her.

She will patiently and cheerfully perform the duties of her humble station, when she has become a humble Christian; and when man has learned in all things to do as he would be done by, gentleness will more truly characterize his spirit and deportment, and happiness may bless them though equality cannot.

In complaining we murmur against God, and not against man. There is no excuse for the guilt of those who despise the weakness which requires their protection,—for the oppression with which they load those who are in some measure the victims of their power. But the religion of Jesus teaches all to suffer in silence,—to win by the exhibition of every Christian virtue, the kindness which is not granted from principle.

It is not when treated as a plaything to be dressed and caressed, that woman has attained her true rank and elevation. Perhaps she is never more heartily despised than when she is so regarded; no treatment more plainly tells her that she is considered inferior in every respect.

There is a dignity without which a woman is contemptible. Until she respects herself, how can she hope to be respected by others. There have ever been those, possessing highly cultivated intellects, but utterly destitute of principle, who utter with their lips unmeaning flattery and disgusting compliments, but who go away and ridicule the simplicity and sincerity with which they are received. I cannot conceive how any one can help feeling the deepest indignation at the insult offered to her when thus addressed. How can she be so blind to her interest, to say nothing of her honor and her purity, as to listen to conversation, which degrades her far more than any direct assertion concerning her standing as an intellectual and moral being?

A young lady, when addressed in the prattling common places so often, so universally used, by one whom she knew to be a liberally educated and intelligent man, immediately manifested displeasure, and instead of returning the smile of approbation, kept silence, while the blush of resentment crimsoned her

cheek. And what was the consequence? Did she lose his favor, and subject herself to his sarcastic ridicule? His society she did not wish, nor his conversation, if this was to be its stamp; insult she would not receive, and was perfectly willing he should understand it. A pause ensued, during which confusion rested upon the countenance of him who had for the first time met so great a degree of independence in a woman, till at length the embarrassment was removed, by her introducing a topic upon which she was sure he could discourse to her edification, and for several hours she listened to his interesting and instructive remarks with delight, and often afterwards enjoyed his society, and profited by his pleasing manner of communicating knowledge. He pronounced her the first sensible woman it had been his fortune to meet, though he had probably met many, far superior, who, like most foolish girls, thought they must listen to, and endure whatever a gentleman thought fit to speak.

Another went to spend an evening where were assembled several college students of

high standing, and young ladies from the same circle in society. Games were introduced, revolting familiarity was permitted, and conversation indulged, disgusting to any refined and intelligent being. Using all the influence she could to convince those of her own sex of the degradation to which they were submitting, and the contempt they were certainly purchasing from those who did all they could to encourage them in folly, and being called bigoted and fastidious, she returned home, not choosing to witness such scenes; and not long afterward heard the same young men spend an hour without intermission, ridiculing the same young ladies, heaping upon them every epithet of scorn. When told that they were most to blame, for their advantages had been superior, and their minds were better cultivated, their answer was, "If young ladies propose games, which necessarily lead to such familiarity, how can we refuse the expected caresses."

When will woman cease to waste her life in attending exclusively to the decoration of her person, and bowing down the slave of fash-

ion? One day, while spending a winter in the city, a young lady entered at the fashionable calling hour, and soon introduced the subject of her morning avocations, saying in a tone of affected and fashionable languor, that she had arisen after the usual breakfast hour of the family, taken a cup of coffee which the servant had neglected to keep hot, —reclined awhile upon the sofa,—drummed a little upon the piano, then dressed to walk down street, and was tired almost to death! This was the way her days, and months, and years were spent. How heavy time hung upon her hands. Oh, woman, for what have you to answer, thus desecrating the precious hours of your existence, given you to prepare for a never-ending eternity, and to exert a holy and purifying influence on the society of which you are a member? You are sometimes compared to a butterfly, but almost sacrilegious is the comparison, for this beautiful insect answers the end of its being. But how will you account for a life far worse than wasted?

A country merchant was purchasing bonnets in a city shop, when a lady entered inquiring for the same article. The gentleman had selected several which were valued at six dollars each, and what was his consternation to hear the lady required to pay twenty dollars for one of the same kind. When she had departed an explanation was asked, and the shopman said she would not have taken it, had he demanded less, for he knew her well, and it was the price of an article, and not its quality, of which she liked to boast. Another in a different place, inquires for shawls, and forty dollars is the price marked for her, though a plain honest man may have the same for twenty. What is her motive, and what the opinion entertained of her by those who see her vain and foolish pride?

Much is said of merchants, of their multitude of prices, and their various ways of deceiving and exacting, but what shall be said of those who thus tempt them? These are not isolated cases. Thousands of women who seem to spend half their time in the

streets and in the shops, act from the same motives and pursue the same course. Some whose husbands labor from the morning dawn to the midnight watch, live in absolute idleness, or engaged only in devising new ways to fashion their "outward adornings," that they may exhibit themselves in the public highways, to excite the homage of some and the envy of many. It is not creditable that they should "work with their hands," but it causes them no pain, no remorse, to see their fathers, husbands and brothers return from the field, the office, and the counting-room, worn and haggard with their incessant toil.

A daughter, whose father has arisen by untiring industry, from humble poverty to a degree of independence, is content to see him toil on, while the mother is bending with the weight of years, and the cares of the household, if she can but receive the fruits of their industry to gratify her vanity and love of ease. Her evenings are spent in vain conversation with those who go away despising her heartlessness. But her complexion is delicate, her fingers are not soiled, and her dress ad-

mits her into the ranks of those who whirl in the giddy vortex of fashion. I said she was content, but contentment never rests upon her countenance, though it may be lighted up when under the influence of excitement. Dissatisfaction and restlessness are visible in all her motions.

If you will obey with me the summons of a church-going bell, I will point you to two beautiful and accomplished girls. As they walk through the carpeted aisle, you may listen to the rustling of silks, and be dazzled with the brilliancy of costly attire. Soon you shall see an aged woman wrinkled with care as well as age, clad in homely garb, hardly decent for the house of God. Alone she comes and takes her seat beside those who should have supported her on the way, for these are mother and daughters. You may seek them in their home, and the young ladies will entertain you with sprightly conversation, and bestow upon you the most gratifying and amiable attentions, but in vain you watch the opening door, and hope for the privilege of honoring the aged. Where is the

honest pride which should spring up in the bosom of every child, and bid it throb with pleasure at the opportunity of rising up to reverence a parent's hoary head? Where is the Christian principle that prompts self-denial and persevering exertion, that a mother who has watched over the helplessness of childhood, and endured indescribable hardships, may rest when the bloom has faded from her cheek, and strength and elasticity wasted from her sinking frame!

But I should be happy to lead you to a humble cottage, not far distant from this abode of "false appearances," where a sick and aged mother is supported and comforted by a daughter's untiring devotion,—where splendor and external display are sacrificed to comfort. Ellen H—— is the daughter of a poor but intelligent and industrious mechanic. As in many other unaccountable instances, a "youth of labor" has *not* brought "an age of ease." While the footsteps seem almost to totter to the daily task, none of the appointed hours must cease. The daily toil must still be done to earn the

daily bread. But cheerfully is it all performed; for peace has ever sat enthroned beneath that lowly roof, and happiness smiled around the frugal board. You may enter at any time, and be sure of a cordial welcome and a pleasant smile. You will be delighted with the conversation of an unpretending man, who has been a close observer of men and things, and spent many leisure hours in profitable reading with his wife and children. From this neat and modest parlor, age is not excluded; the mother enlivens it with her intelligent countenance, and the daughters are not less happy, nor less pleasing, no, nor less *conspicuous*, in the presence of those whom without affectation they delight to honor, and to whom they pay the respect which from youth is ever due to the crown of years. Ellen has been endowed with a mind of more than ordinary capacity, and has bestowed upon it more than ordinary cultivation. Intelligence beams from her sparkling eye, and the smile of gladness plays upon her expressive features. She is not handsome, in the common acceptance of the

term, and yet you could not see her without thinking her beautiful. But you must watch her gentle footsteps by the couch of suffering, and see her patient performance of duty in the home where she diffuses the light of her own cheerful spirit, to learn all her worth. Homes like these are the bright roses in this selfish world, and how refreshing to meet them, as we journey through the wilderness. But Christian principle is the guiding star, and without its bright and ever glowing radiance, life must necessarily be a desert, and happiness but a name.

Catharine C—— is a young lady, who has had every worldly advantage, is possessed of native grace, and is by no means destitute of mental energy. But she has never thought of acting from principle, or seeking anything but her own gratification. Being asked one day, what was her object in life,—for what she was living? she answered, “Nothing: what is there worth living for? I hate every body and every thing; how dull and tedious is every hour as it wears away.” Deluded victim of thine own voluntary blind-

ness ! Just leave the downy couch on which thou art listlessly reclining, and thread with me the dark lanes of your crowded city. I will not lead thee to the miserable abodes of wretchedness and crime, so startling to one who has breathed only the pure air of spacious and gilded halls, and been carefully guarded from even the sight of poverty, but enter that humble dwelling, whose external appearance indicates comparative comfort and enjoyment. In the corner of a little room that will seem to thee dismal indeed, and to threaten contagion, you may look upon the pallid countenance and wasted form of a patient girl, as she lies extended upon a couch of suffering. Glance your eye around in hopes to meet one of the luxuries of your own sick room, and you search in vain. Not even a cushioned chair, upon which to repose her aching limbs, is seen. She is taken from the comfortless pillow, and placed upon a frame of wood, with open slats, to wear away the little flesh that remains upon her skeleton form, while she sits shivering for the want of the clothing so

grateful to the victim of cold consumption. The mother is weeping as she looks upon her child, to whom with weary days and waking nights she cannot bring relief.

Wilt thou return to thy home and feel that thou hast nothing to do? How trifling a portion of what is granted for thy weekly expenditure, with a few hours' labor of thy skilful hand, would make that desolate room seem a palace to its occupants, purchase thee their earnest prayers, and bring thee the blessings of Heaven. Thy heart would no longer be void, nor existence a burden.

Remote from you, in a pleasant rural spot, stands a dilapidated cottage. The roof is falling to decay, and the walls are dark with age, and crumbling by reason of the "gnawing worm and the beating storm." You may enter by pulling a leathern string, which will lift the wooden latch, and permit the door to swing on its hinges. Within, you will see the large old fashioned naked beams above your head, all neatly white-washed, and the unpainted ceiling scoured to whiteness. You will be greeted by a form and countenance in

no wise comely, if comeliness to your eye consist in fine proportions, and delicate features, for the matron of this humble abode possesses none of these. But you may remain weeks and months beneath her lowly roof, and hear no murmur, for no murmur arises in her heart. From early morn till late at eve, she plies the busy needle to supply her daily wants, grateful for the frugal meal, and the health which makes it ever welcome. If you will linger by the fireside after the labors of the evening are closed, you shall hear the voice of praise and thanksgiving, for the countless mercies of the day, and the prayer for protection during the silent watches of the night; and in the morning the expressions of gratitude for the golden beams of the returning sun. To be sure she is highly favored in being far away from "the city's din" and the "busy hum of men;" she can look up to the bright blue canopy of heaven, and abroad on the green fields of earth; the green sward smiles around her door, the orchard blooms beneath her window, and the little garden greets her with

its refreshing breath. But all these blessings are strown around thousands, who pour not out in return to God who gave them, the incense of a grateful heart. She has learned to live not for herself alone, but to endeavor, though in a humble sphere, to glorify her Father in heaven, and to "do good as she has opportunity." She does not look upon earth as her abiding place, but forward and upward to mansions in the skies. She has learned to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. The sweet promises of the gospel bring consolation to her spirit, and are manna to her soul.

It is ever thus: beings constituted as we are, can never enjoy happiness while seeking it exclusively for ourselves. Others must share our joy, or it loses half its power; others must share our sorrow, or it preys upon the spirits and blights the heart. We should be ever ready to partake of all the innocent pleasures of others, and to lighten their burdens.

Jesus went about doing good, and his is the example we are to follow. We may go

with him through the streets of Jerusalem, follow him to the shores of Galilee and Genesaret, in the valley and in the wilderness, and we shall ever find him among the poor and wretched, relieving their distresses and supplying their wants. To elevate those employed in menial services, and scatter the blessings of health and plenty among the sick and destitute, occupied all the days of his earthly pilgrimage. How are we filled with wonder and adoration, as we behold the Lord of glory, not in the princely palace of the nobleman, but in the lowly cot of the fisherman, choosing his companions from among the poor and despised of the world,—feeding the multitudes by the sea-side, and weeping with Martha and Mary at the grave of Lazarus. He feasted not at the tables of the rich, nor commended her who thought only of preparing for him an elegant repast, instead of listening to his heavenly instructions. Until Christians partake more of this spirit, and more closely imitate his example, the glorious sun of the millennium will never dawn upon our benighted world.

How often are the profligate welcomed, with cordial words and smiles, if not with cordial hearts, to firesides from which the honest and intelligent mechanic and his apprentice are excluded with contempt.

A man of pleasing manners and cultivated mind, with an amiable and accomplished wife, went to reside in a village, where the inhabitants were more than usually tinctured with the "pride of birth." They received not the call of civility, nor the nod of recognition, and for the specified reason, that they were supported by a trade! How could an American give such a reason, without blushing with shame? How could a Christian, without being struck dumb with confusion? The humble but worthy mechanic left a place where industry was a disgrace, but where beings polluted with vice, went reeling from the refined circles in which they were flattered and caressed. Shame on those who assume the name of Christian, but to stamp it with degradation!

How many young men in the study, the

office, and the counting-room, are ruined by the long neglect which they experience from those who will not treat them with civility, until their industry shall be crowned with wealth. The student must go to the recitation-room to hear lectures upon moral science,—the importance of moral courage and performance of moral duties, from teachers who take little pains to exemplify these principles in their intercourse with those over whom they ought to exert so great a moral influence. The object of students assembling at a literary institution is study, and to study should their energies be devoted. But they must and will have some relaxation ; if that which is adapted to profit is not provided, they will certainly seek that which is not. At least a kind word of recognition might be given, and an habitual pleasant morning salutation has had a lasting effect upon a young man's character. I have known a student to go through college cheerful and hopeful, encouraged by the kind attentions of one professor, though all others were cold and repulsive.

Man is a social being, and *some* society every youth will have; if neglected by the moral and religious in community, he will be left to the vicious, and few young men at the age of fourteen, are so fortified by principle as to be able to resist the wiles of the wicked. What mother, or sister, when a son or brother goes forth into the world to be tried by its temptations, or led away by its seductions, would not feel her heart overflowing with gratitude, to one who would receive him with kindness, and encourage him by word and example to walk in the paths of integrity and virtue? Cannot all Christians remember that every young man has a mother, whose solicitude none but a mother can understand; perhaps a sister from whose mind anxiety is never for a moment banished?

Will they not “do as they would be done by,” and strive to exert some good influence over those removed from the refining and restraining influences of home. Perhaps some fashionable lady is ready to ask, “Shall I invite an awkward student or apprentice to my parties, and appear with him in public

assemblies?" And I am as ready to answer, No, for you will thus only be the instrument of evil, and not of good. But if your home is what every home may be, you can occasionally let him meet with your family circle, where the presence of parents produces wholesome restraint, and detracts nothing from the buoyant cheerfulness of youth,—where he may be reminded of home, and feel that he is its representative, and has a character to establish; that mere temporal prosperity depends upon its being preserved pure.

I would not have you invite him to gallant you to public assemblies, for gallantry is but the stepping-stone to vice. A young man, when asked why he did not take his sister to a place of amusement, to which he was about to escort a beautiful and accomplished girl, answered, that he would not see his sister in such a place. One young lady being reproached by another, for refusing to associate with her brother, and told that she might as well refuse to associate with her own, replied, "I consider it my duty, as long as it is in my power, to try to exert a good

influence over my own brother, and should have far more hope of succeeding, if he were treated in a proper manner by the young ladies whom he meets. There is not one who will refuse any attention from him ; not one who does not appear delighted with his unmeaning flatteries. You teach him to despise yourself and your sex. How earnestly would I thank you, if, while you endeavor to win your own brother, by the most conciliating kindness, you would, with unyielding integrity, let him see that you prefer virtue, by choosing your companions from among the virtuous. I should not then have to pray alone and in vain. How often, after a call, a walk, or ride, when he has bestowed upon you every attention, and you have worn your sweetest smiles, have I heard him call you what any modest woman should blush to hear, and weep day and night to think she has justly earned. How comparatively happy should I be, how grateful, if he were never admitted to your circle. It is not when he goes forth amidst the turmoil of business, that I fear for his integrity, but when he is

surrounded by the heartless votaries of fashion, who court the flatteries of the polished seducer, and seem pleased with the poisonous breath, and caresses of the profligate.”

CHAPTER II.

WHILE often speaking of the guilt and indifference of Christians, in their example and intercourse with those around them, I would not for a moment be understood to say, that man is responsible for all the sin and misery of his fellow-man. Although believing that much wretchedness might be relieved by more persevering and systematic effort, and that the church is verily guilty in its indifference and inefficiency, I am a firm believer in the depravity of the human heart. If the Bible did not teach me this doctrine, I should learn it by observation in the world; and if I did not find it there, I should only have to look within my own bosom to be

thoroughly convinced of its truth. I have watched the dawning and progress of many infant minds, and could not fail to see developing as early and more rapidly every evil passion. Children are beautiful and comparatively innocent, and cannot fail to win the love of any one not wholly selfish, by their artless ways. But I have never yet had an opportunity to love one that was free from disagreeable traits; and in the most beautiful and affectionate little creature I ever knew, I have discovered, though I would willingly have been blind, the germ of every unholy and revolting passion. It is by their very artlessness that their propensities are revealed. When they have learned that malice, envy, hatred, and jealousy cannot be indulged without forfeiting confidence, they learn to conceal, and, in a measure, to govern these evil tendencies, but the roots are ever growing, unless eradicated by something more than human effort. A little girl often says, when reproved, "Well, how came I to be so wicked, always wanting to do something wrong? I *do* try, but I cannot make myself any bet-

ter." She has early learned her own weakness; and may she early learn where to go for strength.

We might judge from the assertions of some writers that the heart is naturally more disposed to good than to evil. We hear them speak of the demoralizing influence of "society," its pernicious systems of punishment, instead of encouragement, blaming it for every crime that is committed, for the degradation of every family, for every heart-rending scene of misery, for every wail of woe. We are told that the murderer has come to be the guilty being he now is through the early social influences by which he has been surrounded; the want of some kindly word and friendly hand has driven him, yes, *necessarily* driven him to the dungeon and the scaffold. We might infer that the most degraded classes are by far the most free from debasing passions, but *circumstances* have somehow hurried them on from sin to sin, and those who have the outward appearance of respectability and worth, are continu-

ally endeavoring to load those beneath them with the galling yoke of oppression.

“Society” is responsible for all the crimes that are committed, and doubly guilty for requiring their expiation on the gallows! But what is society but a mass of human beings, possessing *human hearts*? If those who have, by reason of superior minds, education, and privileges, risen to posts of honor, trust, and influence, were perfect themselves, their plans would be alike perfect. “To err is human.” That many of those who make and execute laws care very little whether they are just or unjust, I have no doubt; but neither do I doubt that many sincerely and honestly seek the best good of their fellow-men.

Most of the laws, the disobedience of which is punished with severity, are the laws of God. When set at defiance by one, another must necessarily suffer, and man assumes the right, whether it was given him or not, to punish those who wilfully attempt to destroy his life and property, and thinks it

just that they should be restrained from going on in their course of aggression. It may be said, "They were taught to lie, steal, and do all manner of wickedness," but there are few in civilized countries who are not aware of the existence of such a book as the Bible, and are not familiar with some of its precepts. Theft and robbery are seldom committed without studied caution against detection,—without a knowledge that the law of God, as well as the law of the land, is transgressed.

I know that efforts to reclaim those who have fallen are not often enough used, and the temptations by which they have been assailed are not sufficiently considered. But riches and the gratification of every want do not always stifle the propensity to take from others, nor is the kindest care always repaid with gratitude. The Spirit of God must accompany the words of man's teachings, or in vain will be his efforts.

How far physical restraint should be imposed is difficult to decide, as every parent as well as magistrate must be willing to acknowledge. I have known many to deter-

mine that the rod should never inspire their children with terror; and when it became necessary for them to govern, have seemed, from the frequency of its application, to consider it the only proper way of ensuring obedience.

I one day told a gentleman, who had often been heard to condemn and denounce all governments and all physical restraint, that a little child had frequently attempted to set fire to some shavings, which, had they burned, would inevitably have destroyed his house. What was my surprise to hear him, while trembling and pale with the anger which would be very natural under such circumstances, pronounce him worthy of a punishment which, had it been executed, would have exceeded any thing of which I ever read in the annals of cruelty. I replied, that I supposed it was from mere thoughtlessness in the child; but he insisted that he deserved the severest chastisement. I could not help wondering, if he had the power to bestow it, what punishment the man of years would receive at his hand, for the deliberate attempt

to destroy a multitude of lives and an incalculable amount of property, by applying the torch to an immense block of buildings. How little we know of our own hearts until assailed by temptation.

But it cannot long be a question of doubt, whether a man who has ruined the reputation of an ignorant, artless girl, fled from the pursuit of justice, assumed a new name, and commenced again his career of profligacy, shall be permitted to go on, and no physical force be used to restrain him. His crimes have not been perpetrated in the heat of passion, nor under the influence of any unusual temptation. They have been deliberately planned, and deliberately executed, by a member of a Christian church, whose voice has been often heard in the social meeting and at the family altar. The holy precepts of the Bible are familiar to him, and others have listened while he expounded the Scriptures. In the prisoner's cell he may have time and opportunity to reflect upon what he has so often entreated others to ponder. Constant and laborious employment may divert

his mind from wicked devices, and disgrace may at length lead to remorse.

A youth who had been exposed to no greater contamination in childhood than many others around him, was early received into a Christian family. Unwearied pains were taken, and much expense was incurred, to have him instructed in the useful branches of knowledge. His occupations and sports were rural, and his situation in a remote country establishment secluded him from all vicious society. Kind friends were continually endeavoring to enlighten his mind, and inspire him with a love of noble pursuits. But his nature was grovelling, and all the efforts of Christians and the kindness of friends were unavailing. Not for the first betrayal of trust, not for the first crime, nor for many, was he excluded from the house that had sheltered him, and grievously did a Christian woman mourn and weep when convinced of her duty to part with one she had long and faithfully tried to bless. Her children were exposed to contamination, and artfully poisoned by unholy principles, and

no one could doubt about what *was* her duty. He departed, and still friends did not forsake him, nor cease to interest themselves in his behalf. May the good seed which has been sown yet spring up and bear fruit ; but I fear his career of crime will continue, till he is lodged within the gloomy walls of a dungeon. I cannot think that such receptacles are unnecessary for persons like these, and there are thousands of the same description. Yet I would not exclude them from the voice of kindness, but would surround them with the means of instruction, and have them hear the joyful sound of the gospel.

Ignorance is often, very often, but not always, the cause of crime. Had not Judas sat at the feet of Jesus, with Peter, James and John? Had not the same benignant smile beamed from the Saviour's countenance upon him as upon the other disciples? Had he not listened to the same blessed precepts, and witnessed the same holy example? And yet he deliberately betrayed his Master!

Jesus dwelt upon the earth several years, and never ceased to preach and to teach in

the synagogues of Jerusalem, and to do good among the people, and yet pronounced them a faithless generation. He lived a holy life, and died a cruel but glorious death, and when was corruption more rife than during the days of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord of glory? Peter, Paul, Timothy, James, and a host of pious evangelists succeeded him, and went through the cities and villages, from Jerusalem to Rome, proclaiming the gospel of peace, renouncing the vanities of the world, and living religion as well as teaching it; but where shall we look for darker pictures of human nature than they represent to us; where for baser passions than they were obliged to contend with in all their intercourse with Jew and Gentile?

In the days of the patriarchs no general form of government had been instituted; but when the people of Israel were journeying through the wilderness, though they had Moses, the "meekest man," to rule over them, and God, in the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to guide them, where shall we look for a more determined

spirit of rebellion than was exhibited at the foot of Sinai? where, for bitter murmurings like those which were hushed by the gushing fount of Meribah? They had just been delivered from the most cruel bondage by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, but even the buoyancy of freedom seemed more oppressive than the galling yoke of the Egyptian. When settled in the land of Canaan, where the vine and the olive sprung up spontaneously, and they were hardly obliged to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows; when judges ruled over the people, and the holy prophets were their teachers, Israel rebelled, and asked of the Lord a king, to be their ruler. Saul was anointed king by God himself, and instructed by Samuel, the reverend seer; yet infamous indeed were some of his princely decrees. Solomon, the wisest of all men, surely did not live the purest and most exemplary life.

Christ enjoined his disciples so speedily to become reconciled to their adversaries as to be in no danger of the magistrate, the council, or the prison. But though living under one

of the most corrupt governments that ever existed, he said nothing against it or the rulers, but exhorted all to be holy in life and conversation. He reproved in the most gentle and forgiving language, yet one who had long listened to his heavenly instructions, and had been blessed with his heavenly smile,—who had said he was willing to die with him, was found in the hour of trial denying his master, ay, even *cursing* and *swearing*, as he protested he “never knew the man.”

“But what,” it is asked, “does all this prove?” I cannot help thinking it proves the heart to be “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” The voice of kindness and the smile of affection will often win the wandering back to duty, but there are some so hardened that these will not soften them, some natures so obdurate that they will not affect them.

I am not desirous to excuse Christians for their gross neglect of duty, nor governors for the frequent injustice of their administrations. No one will rejoice more sincerely when wars and rumors of wars shall have ceased,

when the sword shall have been converted into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook. But I cannot think it wrong to compel those to desist from crimes who are determined against all light and knowledge to commit them. I would have Christians more in earnest to diffuse the pure principles of the gospel; and the more thoroughly they are imbued with the spirit of Christ, the more extensive and persevering will be their efforts that the glorious beams from the Sun of righteousness may penetrate every dark recess and remote corner among the habitations of men.

Those who deal justly and walk uprightly do not feel the weight of any unrighteous punishment; those who from principle seek the path of rectitude, are never impelled by physical force. But when, judging of those who have fallen, or gone astray, if we have ever looked into the depths of our own hearts, we shall be disposed to consider well the influences by which they have been surrounded, the temptations which have been spread before them, ere we pronounce them

worse by nature than ourselves, ere we look upon them with contempt rather than pity, and treat them with neglectful scorn instead of extending to them the hand of forgiveness, and speaking with the voice of compassion.

CHAPTER III.

OFTEN might deeds of crime be prevented, and honest industry promoted, by a little more consideration on the part of those in whose power it lies to afford employment and give encouragement.

A millionaire stands at the desk where he has stood thirty years, with the most assiduous attention to business. He is still anxious to add to his hoarded stores, and with unabated assiduity goes on balancing the gains and losses, and figuring up the endless columns of debt and credit. A young man, of modest mien and humble garb enters the counting-room, seeking employment. After having passed through varied and discourag-

ing scenes, oppressed by the cruel hand of poverty, and dejected by continual disappointment, but with unspotted integrity, though tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, he resolves to make one more effort ere he gives up in despair. The gentleman as he indifferently raises his eyes to the humble stranger, replies, that he is busy, and besides has no means of furnishing him with the desired occupation, and resumes his calculations. O that he would once more gaze on that pale and haggard face; that he could see that sinking heart, and for one moment feel the burning fever of that reeling brain; that he could enter the home from which that son has departed, and see the flushed and sunken cheek of an anxious mother, the scalding tear which cannot be restrained, as a devoted and loving sister breathes her deep and fervent supplication to the throne of mercy, for the brother who has been the companion of her early years, and the recipient of her fond affections. O that this only remaining hope may not be blighted!

If that youth goes forth in utter hopeless-

ness, and at length, frenzied by despair, puts an end to his existence, on whose skirts will his blood be found? If that mother and sister sink rapidly into an untimely grave, at whose account will it be set down in the day of judgment?

I murmur not against the rich for acquiring riches, but respect the talent and perseverance which must necessarily be called in requisition to accomplish what they accomplish. I doubt not that through many channels, the widow and orphan are made to rejoice in their benevolence, and know that thousands have the gospel preached to them through their means. I would not utterly condemn the man who thus indifferently listens to the "cry of help." It may so often sound in his ears, that he feels compelled to refuse even to hear. Neither do I consider him guiltless who puts an end to his existence, whatever the circumstances which seemed to have compelled him. If he has neglected to put his trust in God,—has been influenced by worldly ambition, instead of seeking the peace which Jesus offers to the despised and

disconsolate, for all these things God will bring him into judgment. But I cannot help recurring to the thousands who are struggling and toiling,—famishing and wasting for the bread of life. Not desiring a gift, or wishing to eat the bread of idleness, but merely the labor by which they may respectably and honestly live.

The least of all deeds of kindness seldom goes unrewarded. A young man entered a clothing establishment in a large city, and for some time gazed about without making known his errand; and might not have summoned courage to speak at all, if the owner had not addressed him in tones of kindness and wished to know why he had called. After much hesitation he informed the gentleman, that *he was going to be married*, and ship on board a vessel that was then lying in the harbor, and wanted a suit of clothes, *but had not a dollar with which to purchase them!*

What utilitarian would not have reproved him, for so foolish a step, as that of assuming the labor and responsibility of providing for two, ere he could well supply the absolute

wants of one. What the merchant read upon the countenance of the frank and honest youth I cannot tell. He might have argued that industry must necessarily characterize one so frank in confessing his indigence ; but influenced by this conclusion, or from a desire to reward his frankness, or from the impulse of a generous heart, he gratified him to the extent of his humble wants, trusting to far distant and uncertain prosperity for remuneration ; and so saw him depart with buoyant step and gladsome smile, while expressions of sincerest gratitude were bursting from his lips. Soon he embarked, with his fair young bride, and took up his abode in a distant land. Not many years afterwards, the son of a wealthy merchant in the city of —, was advised to try a sea voyage and a warmer climate, for his sinking health. He visited the shores of South America,—lingered a while beneath her sunny skies, and returned to his native home. Strength again failing, he sailed a second time for the same country and the same port. But a trifling circumstance detained the vessel farther north, where he landed, the victim of

confirmed consumption. "A stranger in a strange land," how gloomy seemed the blue skies above and the fair green earth beneath ; but there he must remain. How his heart fainted at the thought of being attended by those whom neither affection nor interest could prompt ! how he shuddered as he imagined the body deposited in the cold grave, and hastily covered by the careless hand of the mercenary, witnessed by the vacant gaze of indifference. But there he must remain ; the vessel must return freighted with these heavy tidings to a mother's bosom, and bid a father go mourning to the grave.

These thoughts had scarcely time to succeed each other, in his distracted mind, ere he hears his name upon the lips of one whose countenance he faintly remembers ; finds his hand cordially pressed, as he is welcomed to the hospitalities which one of his own countrymen can afford him, amidst the strange and repulsive features of a Spanish city. He soon learns that the man who thus accosts him, came from dear New England, that they are natives of the same city ; that they

have been neighbors, and is this all? This is enough to ensure him a warm reception, and to make him feel at home. But he is told by his new friend, how, when a penniless youth, he entered a merchant's store with what he felt to be an unreasonable request, and with the expectation of being refused, and, to his disappointment, was befriended, not only with the supplying of his necessities, but with kind words and encouraging hopes. And when he had heard that a sick stranger, bearing the name of L——, had been brought in the New England ship, he hastened to offer the comforts which his home could give, to the son of his fondly remembered and honored friend. The young girl who consented to share the fortunes of an honest sailor, had become the matron of a well-ordered house, and how cheerfully is every delicate attention bestowed upon the interesting sufferer.

The vessel returns with sad tidings indeed to a parent's heart, but a precious balm it carries too,—balm as soothing as earth can offer to a wounded spirit. The mother feels

that her child is pillowed on the bosom of friendship, and the father knows that the green grass will smile upon his grave, and a little monument will mark his resting-place.

Not many years since, my heart was made to bleed by listening to the story of the treatment which a lone widow received from a city capitalist. I had known her in the days of her prosperity. Her husband, in their early life, had been greatly prospered, and their home was furnished with every comfort and luxury. But wealth and indulgence did not make them forget others. The needy were never sent destitute from their door, and often have I heard their generosity spoken of as a fault. But adversity came, and he who thought of retiring from business, by a sudden reverse of fortune found himself in poverty. With a large family dependent upon him, he was obliged to return again into the turmoil of trade, and felt the necessity of making great exertions and sacrifices, whilst health and vigor remained. He embarked for a distant land, and the first intelligence which his devoted family re-

ceived, was, that he had fallen the victim of a sultry clime. No words can tell their sorrow ; they felt it to be their first affliction. He had been a kind husband and an humble Christian, and this was comfort to the bosom of a Christian wife. He had been a fond and affectionate father, and a man against whom the world had never lisped a word of censure, and this his children are justly proud to repeat.

They were sheltered by a house which was not their own, and the son and brother to whom they must now look for advice and assistance, was far away. This tenement was the property of one who had nothing to do, but to sit down at his fireside and count the interest of his millions, as it was regularly brought to him by the stewards of his wealth. And how is he affected when he hears of the afflictions of the widow and the orphan? Ere the first burst of grief had subsided,—ere the bitter tears which are shed in the first moments of anguish, had been wiped away, they hear the astounding message that they must seek an humbler abode, or immediately

advance the sum due for the quarter's rent. Again and again, did the messenger return with the evil tidings, and with others more revolting, and nothing but the reproaches of those whose contempt he did not wish to incur, and to whom he did not wish to expose his vileness, prevented a lovely family, in the deepest affliction, from being obliged to go forth, they knew not whither, to seek a shelter they knew not where.

I hardly expect to be believed when I assert that there ever lived in New England, a man with heart so callous and so cold, for I could hardly believe myself, though I heard the facts from the lips of the sufferers. What could ever warm his bosom? where could he look for happiness? His slumbers must have tossed him on a bed of thorns, and his dreams must have been visions of woe. Thus he lived and thus he died,—he has appeared before the Judge of all the earth, and has rendered up his account to God.

The widow and the orphan found other friends, and those who had so often befriended the unfortunate, were not forsaken in the

hour of trial and adversity. They have lived to be honored and blessed, and are looking forward to a happy home in heaven.

I have taken no pains to collect the incidents which I relate; they have been treasured with hardly the consciousness of so doing, as I have seen and heard what any observers may see and hear within a very limited sphere. And this is why I relate them, because they are every day occurrences, among people with whom we every day associate,—people like ourselves, acting under the same circumstances. There is no reason why we should not imitate the good and avoid the bad. Imagination lends no glowing colors to the characters I portray, nor to the scenes I represent; they are plain and simple facts, told so that the most plain and simple can understand.

The following will pleasingly contrast with the one just given, and shows the consequence of a little self-denial.

The professional men of a certain class, how justly I cannot tell, have ever been accused of possessing hearts harder than the

flinty rock. They are considered almost necessarily, and whether necessarily or not, “liars” and “extortioners.” They are expected to be “greedy of gain” and to “grind the face of the poor.”

An honest peasant had been unjustly defrauded and cruelly deprived of the patient animal, which constituted the most valuable portion of his earthly possessions. The pure milk which she brought from the green pastures supplied him and his family with daily food. He applied to a lawyer for assistance in obtaining again what was his own, though he hardly knew how he should be able to pay him for his trouble. It did indeed cause him considerable trouble,—required careful examination of many “similar cases” with the “decisions thereon,” and many words to convict those of crime, who had wilfully wronged one whom they supposed incapable of obtaining redress.

It is no more than right that for service rendered just compensation should be received, and when his “cause was gained,” it was with gratitude that the injured man offered

the contents of his scanty purse, to him who had successfully pleaded in his behalf. What was his astonishment when all recompense was refused ; and a whole warm coat was offered him to be substituted for the soiled and tattered one he wore. The tears coursed down his furrowed cheeks, as his trembling hand reached forth to take the gift, but his lips were motionless ; words were feeble instruments to express the language of his heart, at such an hour, but with looks more eloquent than words can ever be, he warmed the giver's heart, and bent his tottering footsteps in silence towards his humble home. The young man had himself been poor,—had been only a little while in business ; was not yet in affluent, hardly in prosperous, circumstances.

But is not the blessing of that aged man of more value than sumless riches ? Follow him to his lowly cottage, and see the happy faces which surround his table at the evening meal ; hear the prayers that ascend at night from that fire-side altar, and tell me if they are not priceless treasures, compared with a

few shining coins, which he might have received from out the hard earnings of the hand of honesty?

Very little things are these, not worth mentioning, it may be thought, among the brilliant actions and costly sacrifices which might be recorded. But man is an intelligent and immortal being, and any one who attempts to elevate him as an intellectual, religious and moral being, is nobly employed.

This trifling kindness kindled gratitude never to be stifled in many hearts; filled a home with happiness,—inspired a love of noble deeds and pure intentions,—did something towards wiping dishonor from a large class in community, and aided the cause of morals and religion.

But this act of benevolence did not proceed from impulse alone. It was the result of principle,—of a well digested system for doing good. It was performed by one who *studies* how he may benefit all who come under his influence. If he meets the lowest day laborer, he may even be a drunkard and a profane man, a train of conversation is deli-

cately introduced, by which vice is reproved and virtue encouraged, without giving offence or ensuring to himself hatred. No familiarity is indulged,—nothing is visible but gentle consideration of the one, and sincere respect on the part of the other. It is not done to gain the applause of the multitude, for with such a motive, vice must necessarily be sometimes countenanced, and the unprincipled and vicious treated as companions.

To do good to his fellow-men is his object and how he may promote it his study. The poor are not despised for their poverty, and no one whom he recognizes as an honest man, however humble his station, is passed by without a friendly recognition. All whom he can aid by advice, recommendation or labor, are promoted to posts of industry, respectability and honor.

There are some who are better by nature than others; members of the same family, governed by the same discipline, experiencing the same kindness, watched over with the same anxious solicitude, favored with the same religious privileges and intellectual advanta-

ges, differ greatly in every thought and action. There are some who seem to be made up of selfishness, whom grace alone can render considerate, amiable, and self-denying.

I know that much depends upon the treatment of different dispositions, and that scarcely any two ought to receive the same. Those who have minds to train are not sufficiently careful to understand the wants of each. The same discipline may be entirely unsuitable for individuals belonging to the same household. A harsh reproof may seriously injure the mind and heart of a shrinking, sensitive child, who only needs the most gentle remonstrance to ensure obedience and the most scrupulous attention to the requests of a parent. I have seen what could not be called by any softer name than tyrannical severity, inflicted upon one who had acted contrary to the wishes of parents, though without a knowledge of their opinions, and with no intention of doing wrong. While believing that often to spare the rod is guilt, and that fear of a certain kind, and to a certain degree, ought to be mingled with the

feelings of children towards parents, I cannot think the conduct which engenders a slavish dread, and destroys all frank and confidential intercourse, is at all necessary or in any wise justifiable. These effects are often deplored and deprecated, by those who have never studied to understand the mental or moral constitution of those committed to their care; they have punished alike for voluntary and accidental offences,—shown displeasure at the consequences of sin rather than for the sin itself, or neglected to notice at all what needed serious reproof. I have seen children actually trembling when coming into the presence of parents, lest some inadvertence of word or manner should bring upon them a torrent of rage, or, what is worse, the sullen silence of weeks and months. Some need only to be reminded of their duty, and others need continual physical restraint. Either of these methods applied indiscriminately, would evidently bring deplorable consequences to the victim.

A father who thought it undignified to receive the caresses of children, left them to

the care of a weak and indulgent mother, who endeavored by every deception to screen them from a father's stern rebukes. By her they were never reprov'd, and by him ever repuls'd, and treated with contempt. What could be expected of the human heart nurtured in such a soil? He who was ambitious of worldly distinction, devoted his time to making and defending the laws, which he lived see condemn more than one son to capital punishment for capital crime. He then condemned the law, but whether remorse ever visited his conscience for having prepared the victims of its well known decrees, eternity alone will reveal. How many a felon might trace his infamy to a parent's criminal neglect!

The two greatest men our country can boast, have owed their greatness, as far as human means are concerned, to the judicious guardianship of mothers possessing common sense and uncompromising principle. Mary, the mother of Washington, has been cited by almost every one who ever wrote a book, which had any thing to say upon parental

influence. And may the practice continue so long as there is any hope of inducing one woman to imitate her noble example. I have somewhere read an anecdote, which I have in vain sought to read again, that illustrated a trait in her character, which seemed the key to her wonderful success. Personal vanity and love of admiration, those passions so universally ascribed to woman, as far as we can see, were strangers to her bosom. What she considered her duty to perform, was performed without any regard to what the foolish lover of this world's praise might say or think. A right course was pursued, though she were obliged to pursue it alone.

When her son loaded with honors, returned to her house, and was waited upon by foreign ambassadors, arrayed in all the splendor of court uniform, she was in her garden *working with her hands!* Her noble son was not ashamed to introduce a woman, wearing a "*home-made*" dress, and call her his mother.

How many would have thought great expense not improper in making ready for such guests; but they expressed themselves no

longer surprised at the success of American republicanism, with such matrons to *live* as well as *teach* its principles. There would not be the least danger of the downfall of our republican institutions if every woman would "go and do likewise."

The letters of Mrs. Adams have been published, and widely circulated, and show what a woman of superior mind, though without half the advantages of modern education, can accomplish, when conscientiously and earnestly seeking to know and perform her duty.

Common sense and Christian principle are by far the most potent instruments of which a good cause can avail itself. No family is so humble in our land that it may not hope to see its members pillars in the state, and holy and eminent ministers in the church of Christ, if they possess the mind necessary for these stations, and the well-grounded principle, without which no intellectual superiority will gain for them honor or usefulness.

CHAPTER IV.

I HEARD a lecture not many years since from a learned and excellent man, who had gained much knowledge, and had a delightful way of communicating it. He divided mankind into four classes. 1. Those who have no relish for any thing of importance. If any subject, involving the interests of individuals or communities, is introduced, they stare with astonishment; to think, for their own or for others' good, never having been any part of their employment. 2. Amiable, inoffensive beings, who never do any great harm or good in the world. If any thing of importance is mentioned and conversed upon, they begin to yawn, and thus pass through

life without thinking intensely for a moment.

3. The butterfly class, who rove from object to object, and never accomplish any thing from want of steadiness of purpose. 4. Thinkers. To this class belong all who have been the authors of good to the human race, philosophers, philanthropists, inventors, &c.

He proposed many subjects for thought, and one was the life and character of Christ; his object in visiting the world; his crucifixion, death, and glorious resurrection. Who can contemplate these, without having his mind enlarged, his heart purified, and his soul redeemed? The observation is universal, that a true Christian is gentle in disposition and refined in manner, and never could he become one without resolving in his mind serious and important truths; without leaving for a time all indifferent subjects and trifling considerations, and consecrating himself to the most solemn of all studies. As true religion leads to the cultivation of kind feelings, gentleness of deportment must necessarily be the result.

Another subject was the good of those

around us. Whether employed in the field, in the school, in the neighborhood-meeting, in the lecture-room, or in the lyceum, in some way let us impart knowledge and do good, invoking the blessing of Heaven on our efforts.

He said there was no method of obtaining knowledge but by labor and perseverance; no hope of being learned till after a long life of study; that the drag is no more necessary to the best field, ploughed and sown in the best manner, than meditation to the best mind; that the greatest part of mankind were employed in thinking of amusements, of what they should eat and what they should drink and wherewithal they should be clothed; the lawyer of his fees, the merchant of his profits, the farmer of his gains,—of things earthly and sensual,—what is done in this place, and that place, and the other, which can be of no benefit to the mind or heart.

I have no doubt the gentleman would gladly see his suggestions repeated, if they would be likely to circulate more widely, and thus do more good; and I wish I could recall

every idea of a discourse which seemed to me to indicate the highest order of intellect, and to breathe the most fervent desire for the elevation and redemption of every member of the human family, for the glory of God the great Creator, and Christ the glorious Redeemer. I remembered enough to lead me to think more than I had ever done before of the duty of exertion in behalf of others,—of trying to elevate all classes, and of doing some good, in however limited a sphere.

There are endless varieties of titles to endless varieties of books, for “men and women,” for “young gentlemen and ladies,” for “girls and boys,” for “mothers and daughters,” for “husbands and wives,” &c.; and these titles certainly include all human beings, for each of us comes under one of these heads. But in the advice, hints and suggestions which are given, a very important portion of the human family are left entirely out of consideration. We are exhorted to be kind to servants and those in the lower walks of life ; to be considerate to their weakness and ignorance, not to oppress them or treat them

rudely ; but to elevate them, intellectually, at least, is seldom considered a duty, and scarcely a possibility. We are sometimes told the importance of affording them religious privileges, of insisting upon their attending on the outward observances of religion, but nothing farther is required, and how seldom are these things conscientiously heeded.

Young ladies are presented with every motive and inducement for cultivating their minds, renouncing the vanities of the world, preparing for trial, and strengthening themselves against temptation, and are warned against the effects of indulgence in dress and love of display, while those who are in quite as much need of all these encouragements and warnings are forgotten.

How many a poor girl is left to toil in a small room, damp, cold, and comfortless, and when her tasks are finished, must spend the long hours in loneliness, with no pleasant subject to occupy her thoughts, perhaps with no books, provided she can read, and when she wishes to seek recreation with companions like herself, is called a faithless servant,

one that is never at her post, and cannot be trusted.

It is absolutely necessary for a *lady's* health that she should ride or walk in the open air, when the weather is pleasant, and that she should sleep in a spacious and airy apartment; necessary for *her* happiness that she should have pleasant scenes to gaze upon from her window, that she should be surrounded by agreeable companions, spend a portion of her time with interesting books, and suffer no confinement.

It cannot be expected that she should make, daily and hourly, social companions of those with whom she has no congenial tastes and habits; this would not be more agreeable to them than to her. Both would feel a restraint under such circumstances, which would be any thing but pleasant and profitable. But every woman who "sees well to the ways of her household," is obliged to spend many hours of every week, and some many hours of every day, with those who have never been blessed with any means of moral or mental cultivation, or at least have

no continued means of improvement. Cannot they, during these hours, endeavor to convey instruction? Can they not study the best manner of introducing conversation which shall be the medium of truth; which shall inspire a love of what is good and hatred of what is evil? They can relate facts which shall increase intelligence, and perhaps find a mind where there had seemed a vacuum,—awake a habit of thinking in those who had scarcely had a thought in all their lives before. It may cost self-denial and a good deal of effort, but will be no less beneficial to the teacher than the taught. I have seen great good accomplished by these simple means, perseveringly used.

The different intellectual capacities of individuals form grades in society, if they arise from no other cause. The duties of the highest and the lowest are important, and must be performed. There are some minds so superior that no oppression can crush them. No external circumstances could have kept Sherman at the shoemaker's bench, or obliged Herschel to be always a fifer in the army.

Franklin could not help being a philosopher, and Rumford was born with a mind to understand all science. There are a few in every trade and profession who seem to know by intuition what all the others must learn by diligent application. But the opportunity to learn should be given to all, and mental and moral deficiencies should be the only barriers to advancement. Those who look with envy, and are continually railing at all above them, are generally restless spirits, conscious of their incapacity to rise, and yet who cannot be content to remain where God has placed them. The truly great will silently and laboriously climb to where others stand, instead of wishing to pull them down.

Principle is necessary to the faithful performance of duty under any circumstances. The slave, if a Christian, will be a faithful, though he may not be a willing, slave. The better one understands himself, the more capable will he be of judging whether he is occupying the sphere which he is best calculated to fill, and if governed by right motives he will cheerfully perform well his part, however humble it may be.

Those are actuated by a false fear, as well as wicked spirit, who think to be better served by the ignorant and degraded, than by the intelligent and respectable. Heads of families would not so often be complaining of inefficiency and faithlessness, if they themselves possessed the energy and willingness to deny themselves for others, which every Christian ought to possess.

In a well ordered house where I spent many delightful days, a lady had, to superintend her culinary department, a well educated and intelligent woman, of excellent principles and pleasing manners; she had lived there twenty years, and called that her home. She enjoyed all the privileges of an intelligent being; was furnished with neat and airy apartments, which were her own, and a walk or ride was considered as conducive to her happiness, as to the happiness of those who had the means of indulging in every gratification. She was assisted by one whom it would be no abuse of terms to call a well educated and interesting young lady, with manners which indicated refinement and self-

respect, without impertinence or familiarity. If it be said that it is almost impossible to obtain such assistance, I must answer, that it would be far less impossible if Christian women would treat with Christian kindness those whom they employ.

There was yet another, whom the lady said she was endeavoring to educate, to take the place of the second, who was soon to become a wife herself, but *feared that she had not mind enough* to enable her to perform the responsible duties of such a station. But it would take some time to judge, as ever before she had been treated as one whose mind it was of no importance to cultivate.

I need not speak of the comfort and happiness of such an household; where every thing was in perfect order, and virtues instead of faults could be made the subject of conversation. I need not say that people who thus studied the good of those who were dependent upon them, were people of wealth, without any of the pride and repulsiveness so often met, and by some considered inseparable from those in high station. It may

be argued that such people could afford to offer any pecuniary temptation to obtain such domestics, and any pecuniary indulgence to gratify their desires ; this is true, and those who cannot afford to supply every religious, moral and physical comfort to persons sustaining this relation to them, had better deny themselves some of the external decorations and indulgences which foster their vanity, and consent to be served and attended by only as many as they can treat justly and kindly. What more disgusting, to say nothing of wickedness, than to “keep up appearances,” which require so many subterfuges on the part of those who attempt it, and the sacrifice of health and every noble gratification to thousands of immortal beings. It is often forgotten that they are to sustain the relation of wives and mothers, and in this way to exert as extensive and important an influence, as those who are far above them in certain outward respects. They are quite as likely to see their children enjoying the advantages of affluence, in a country where the avenues to riches and honor are open to all who determine to acquire them.

A man enjoying the highest honors of his country, when told of the imbecility and profligacy of his son, answered, "I suppose the wheel must turn round;" and how melancholy is the fact that so few among our noble countrymen have been blessed with sons in any degree capable of filling their places, when the grave claimed them for its own.

There is often a feeling of degradation attached to this kind of service, which if indulged in, renders persons morose and jealous: ever watching for injuries which they are sure will be inflicted, and advantages which they are sure will be taken by those who employ them. A feeling, of which I could never see the reasonableness, for there are few who occupy situations upon which there are not some to look down. There are few who do not feel the irksomeness of confinement, and miserable indeed are those who do not.

The young lady who has no employment which absolutely obliges her to think for the welfare of others as well as her own, is far less to be envied than one who by contract engages to devote her time ministering to her wants, and faithfully performs her duty. But

at least she should be treated kindly, and any one who will try the experiment, will find herself comparatively happy, while attempting with dignity and cheerfulness to increase the respectability and intelligence of those whom Providence has made dependent upon her for daily bread. Some I know would think themselves insulted at the bare suggestion of such a task, and such persons have so little knowledge of moral obligation, so little sense of moral responsibility, that I could wish no one in need of instruction might be subjected to their influence.

How many ridiculous and revolting scenes have I witnessed in families, where every effort was made to give a tinsel splendor to what came under the observation of casual visitors, while the curtain of deception concealed the evidences of poverty, misery and passions uncontrolled.

There is no degradation in honest poverty ; but I can conceive of nothing more degrading and demoralizing than the constant effort, excitement and deception necessary in trying to keep up the appearance of being what we

are not. How I have blushed at the weak and humiliating pride of woman, when witnessing her servility to forms and ceremonies; her love of pre-eminence in style and fashion, in preference to real worth of character. How inconsistent in this country, where we are ever boasting of simplicity, equality, and renunciation of aristocratic lines, to endeavor to keep up the formalities of court society, with the *means* of the country peasant.

A gentleman on coming home to dinner, and finding it not ready,—a dinner which he had ordered and at the luxury of which an English nobleman could not have complained, reproved the servant in no mild terms, who turned to him with the expressive but respectful reproach, “Sir, I have but two hands.”

Two or three young ladies will sit idle in the parlor within three steps of the door, and hear the bell ring repeatedly, knowing perhaps who stands waiting to enter, while the servant of *all work* leaves the bread which she is moulding,—goes through the operation of removing all traces of the *adhesive particles* from her hands, which, all who have tried

the experiment, know cannot be done very expertly, and with aching limbs, and not very cleanly garb or pleasant smile, makes her way through sundry apartments, to usher whoever it may be, into the presence of *friends*, who rise to *express* their pleasure and offer cordial hospitality. What degree of perfection is not required, to enable one whose labors are the most servile drudgery, to bear, with the least patience or complacency, repeated interruptions like this? Where are the hearts and consciences, or rather what are they, of those who compel a human being to lead such a life? Where there are sufficient means, and circumstances render it necessary, I can see no impropriety in employing one whose exclusive province it is, to attend to those who call for business or social purposes. But no excuse can be given for those who, for the sake of appearing what others are, oblige the labors of three to devolve on one.

The tendency of all these things as affecting our political and republican institutions, might be pointed out, but will not be men-

tioned in this collection of causes and effects. Their influence on society in a moral point of view is melancholy indeed, and they cannot be too severely condemned when thus considered. This love of display,—this false shame, is the cause of half the crimes, failures, bankruptcy and heart-breaking, so common now among men of all professions and classes. “In the days of the olden time,” young men could begin as their fathers did ; with small means and small expenditure, and rise gradually to independence, and enjoy “an age of ease.” But in this age of improvement, they must in youth surround themselves with all the luxuries and elegances which boundless wealth alone could justify ; engage in doubtful speculations and hazardous adventures, which not being attended with success, must eventually involve them in perplexity and ruin. Crimes of the deepest dye often follow, and wretchedness to many hearts is the result.

Toil and experience, by which alone real worth and honorable celebrity can be acquired, seem to be banished from the young

man's list of means. He is hardly out of school ere he enters the field of disputation, determined to be known, whether he is respected or not. When the time arrives at which he might reasonably have hoped for honor and usefulness, he must sink into obscurity, because his superficial training will not permit him to fill any responsible station.

A father who had educated a large family to think any manual labor a disgrace, sent his sons forth into the world the most abandoned profligates, who have themselves instilled the same sentiments into others, and scattered over the country many generations, among whom, want of principle and contempt of industry are still to be found with all their baleful consequences. Though poverty stare them in the face, it is no incitement to labor, but to crime.

The daughters were not less successful in disseminating the seeds of vice. Not hesitating to take upon themselves responsibilities, the sacredness of which they had never been taught, when care came they were unprepared for it, and when it became their duty to teach,

though experiencing the greatest misfortunes from the wicked system, they departed not from it, but fostered the same love of idleness, indulged in guilty extravagance, and through successive generations, profligacy and its loathsome attendants may be distinctly traced.

These are the people who help make up society ; but the iron hand of poverty did not originate these evils ; nor the contempt and indifference of cold hearts blight and warm affections which we love to see diffusing their genial influence in this world of sorrow. There was a cause, an efficient and deplorable cause, in the guilty father of a numerous posterity, but the industrious poor by whom he was surrounded, were little injured by his influence, for he did not more despise their poverty, than they his arrogance.

Actuated by different principles he might have proved a great blessing to a new country and infant community, but a curse has been entailed on his own descendants, and been communicated to members of circles in which they did not think it dishonorable

to move. Not only through three and four, but through countless generations, it seems likely to be transmitted, and how the whole heart faints when dwelling upon this accumulation and extension of misery.

The smiles of fortune and the smiles of friends do not always allure to virtue ; and it fills my heart with sorrow to read the assertions of fascinating and sincerely benevolent writers, that nothing more is needed to convert the heart into a palace of pure thoughts, and the world into a paradise, than the favorable circumstances which social intercourse may be made to present.

None can be more sensible of the effects of all ameliorating influences ; but the conviction is forced upon me by observation, if in no other way, that something is necessary, besides the smile of affection and the most favorable external circumstances, to eradicate selfishness and every evil propensity from the human heart. The spirit of grace alone can do it, and the strength of God alone can keep our feet from falling, and our lips from speaking guile.

If those who would abolish all forms in society and do away all restraint, who deny the obligation to observe the Sabbath, and encourage all to trust in their own moral strength, instead of looking to God for assistance, are those who are most earnestly engaged in elevating their fellow-men, and instructing them, exhorting them to every good word and work, I have yet to see it proved. I have heard the head of a family denounce ministers of every name and creed, —ridicule the church, and the doctrines believed by evangelical Christians,—their selfishness and inconsistency,—but what efforts did *he* make to reform the wicked and enlighten the ignorant! I never knew him to make any. Though melting with pity to those who were so far away as to be utterly out of the reach of his efforts to do them good, he could sit Sabbath after Sabbath in idleness, while multitudes of poor degraded beings were without friend or teacher in the streets of his native city.

CHAPTER IV.

THE smiles of nature too, are potent in winning man from grovelling things, and directing him to God. But nature, though a good, is not man's best teacher. The term nature was a conception of the heathen poets, who knew not God, and has been retained in every modern vocabulary as one of convenience, though sometimes objected to, as tending to lead the mind to forget or deny him who made the heavens and the earth and all that in them is; who is the author of all beauty, as well as of all goodness and glory. It has been much perverted of late; a mysterious charm has been thrown over every tree, and leaf, and flower, if charm

it be, to clothe these lovely forms with mystery ; and a sort of idolatrous worship seems to be paid to them. Some who are eminently fitted to talk of earth's loveliness and to tell what others experience, fail of half the good they might accomplish, by using unintelligible terms, and pretending to hold an inconceivable communion with the sky, and its myriads of "beaming eyes," and with the voices which they recognize in ocean, earth and air.

They speak as if privileged beyond others, whilst speaking a language which cannot be understood, though in all their communications as far as I can discern, when divested of the new phrases for which we need a whole new lexicon, there is nothing expressed which is not felt by any one who ever feels at all,—admiration for the works of creation as exhibited in the starry firmament above, and in the earth beneath. I can see no good likely to arise by substituting German mysticism for Puritan common sense.

Those who are determined to acknowledge no God but as an essence pervading all

things, may try to hear the voice of peace whispering to their consciences, and the unsatisfied desire produces the restlessness which incites them to invent some new theory, and clothe it in a fascinating garb, by which thousands are deceived and led astray. But Christians recognize a God who created all things, and by contemplating his works, we are led to magnify his glory, and to see the evidences of omnipotent power, wisdom and goodness.

We talk of communion with the flowers, by which we mean nothing more than the exquisite pleasure we experience while gazing on their loveliness, the perfection of their tints, and the endless variety of their graceful forms. God hath fashioned them, and hath given them to all his creatures, and over all who love him, theirs must be a hallowed influence.

To cultivate them is a source of happiness, to love them is a source of pure pleasure which it would be ungrateful to refuse. There is no cot so humble that they may not grace it ; there are few who do not manifest

by word or look, that some tender chord is touched when pointed to a little flower.

I have received the fairest specimens of the field and forest, from those who seemed lost to every other gentle and refining influence. The peasant, whose sphere of labor doomed him to the lone wood, has ingeniously fashioned a vase of the shining satin leaf, which he has filled with the pure water of the fountain, and tastefully arranged the drooping blue violet, which hides in the long grass, with the graceful lady's slipper entwined with green leaves, and carefully brought them many miles, presenting them with a beaming smile, which told that they had cheered him on his weary homeward way, and that he well knew the pleasure he was about to communicate. Boys, idle and vicious boys too, will often spend a whole day in pulling the long stems of the white lily that rests its head on the bosom of the wave ; and they are distributed in all the parlors of the neighborhood where they dwell.

The Turks have ever been celebrated for their fondness for flowers, though it has not

made them eminent for lovely and agreeable traits of character. There may be some who can look on the sea and the forest, and feel no emotion. There may be here and there one, of whom it could be justly said,

“ A primrose by the river’s brim,
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more.”

It would be in vain to lead such persons to look through nature up to nature’s and the Christian’s God. But there is not a mind however humble, unaffected by imbecility or insanity, that cannot understand the story of Jesus, and trust in his love.

It does not require the learning of the schools to teach the principles of Christianity,—the doctrines of faith and hope. With what inexpressible joy and thankfulness it must fill any one who has ever looked into his own heart, to know that eternal happiness is freely offered to all; that sincere repentance, and faith in him who died to save all men, will give him peace on earth and rest in

heaven. How grateful the assurance, that not in our own strength, or by our own merits, are we to seek the land of promise.

No one can more enthusiastically admire all that is beautiful in this beautiful world ; no one can be more pleased with the discovery of that refinement, which a perception of beauty in any production of nature or art indicates to exist than I ; but I have so often found this in persons utterly destitute of love to God, and benevolence to his creatures, that I cannot think nature alone capable of teaching man to be just and kind to his fellow-man, or to reverence his Creator and trust his Redeemer.

I have of late heard so much of the unintelligible teachings of earth, that I cling with stronger love and firmer hope to the simple and plain language of the Bible, with its sweet consolations and strengthening promises. It does not bid me trust in my own righteousness, which I feel to be "as filthy rags ;" it does not send me forth to seek happiness in the vain pleasures of this world, which I have tried and found "vanity and vexation of spirit." Though it permits me

to love friends and enjoy their society, it tells me of one who is more faithful than a brother; and in all the changes and vicissitudes of life, through sorrow and affliction, it points me to a home of everlasting rest which the "Lord, the righteous Judge, prepares for all who love his name." In hours of sickness I am reminded of the great resources one must have within, to enable him to endure with cheerfulness, and be patient in suffering. O that I could convince them how ineffectual is every light, but that which cometh down from above, to illumine the soul.

To hear a woman openly renounce the Bible, and applaud the writings of Hume, Paine, and Voltaire, shocks us beyond expression; but an infidel, under the refined and indefinable appellation of transcendentalist and rationalist, seems to be pleasing rather than revolting. And two of the most fascinating and able writers of the age are sowing the seeds of infidelity, in this seductive and therefore more dangerous form, throughout the world, with hardly a warning voice raised against their insidious poison.

How often lately have I been obliged to listen to the relation of dreadful crimes committed by woman. How it made my heart bleed, and depressed my spirits, to hear that those enjoying the blessings of refined and educated society, and surrounded by the virtuous, could voluntarily abandon themselves to the indulgence of the lowest vices and most debasing crimes. If the anxious solicitude of mothers, the gentle remonstrances and affectionate watchfulness of sisters, the gratification of every reasonable desire, and all the support which external circumstances can give, will not restrain the passions, who is not ready to acknowledge that the Spirit of God alone can purify, and the strength of God alone can enable weak and erring mortals to flee from temptation and resist evil? Without daily and hourly prayer for assistance, who can for a moment feel safe from the allurements of the world, and the treachery of the human heart?

I feel as if I could not refrain from speaking, and yet know not what to say. What has not already been said to convince those,

who are willing to believe, of the truth of the Christian religion? Yet three several times within a few weeks have I been condemned to hear it doubted from the lips of woman! Each expressed her doubts in a different way, and would be called by a different name.

One can see no proof of the divinity of Christ, and cannot understand the office of the Holy Spirit, and therefore speaks with scorn of the comfort a Christian professes in sincerity to derive from these blessed doctrines of redemption and sanctification.

It is sufficient reason, she asserts, for doubting the truth of the Bible, that she cannot understand it. "Every thing is so mysterious, it is impossible to believe." To understand all that finite curiosity would like to penetrate, may be impossible, but our faith is required, and "he that believeth not shall be damned." It will be no excuse at the last day, that our assent was withheld from every thing beyond our comprehension.—Another would be very glad to enjoy the Christian's peace, but cannot change her opin-

ions, and asks how she is to blame for her thoughts.

'O the pride of the natural heart! how unwilling is proud, rebellious man to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him. One who is determined never to humble himself before God, is not likely very soon to put his trust in the Saviour, and to see the graces of the Spirit made manifest in his heart. When we have determined not to behold the light, it is very easy to shut the eyes that they cannot see. When a truth is unwelcome, it is very easy to cavil against it; when a duty becomes irksome, how prone are we to seek for reasons why it should not be performed.

A young lady early made a profession of religion, and, surrounded by Christian friends, sustained by their prayers, and guarded by their watchfulness, did nothing to dishonor her profession. When disposed to form a new connection, her choice fell upon one who cared for none of these things, or rather only cared to scoff. Not by openly denying the Bible to be the word of God, but by ridiculing its precepts, and sophistically undermining

what she had considered as established doctrines. May he who has taught her to reject a pious father's counsel, to trample on the blood of Christ, and despise the Spirit of grace, not despise her when in her weakness she has put herself entirely in his power. May she never have cause to regret that she refused to listen to the faithful warnings of mother, sister and friends. His respect for her will cease when stability is found wanting, and he who considers himself wiser than Paul, will not be very likely to obey Paul's injunctions ; she who refuses submission to God will find it difficult to submit to the much more humiliating commands and requisitions of man. The heart which has not been subdued by grace will be often tempted to rebel.

But "profession is not principle." Often persons profess to be governed by the pure precepts of Jesus, who possess none of his spirit. Often too, sincere Christians seem to be wholly unmindful of little duties, and manifest any thing but a Christian spirit, in the performance of their daily avocations.

A young and delicate creature entrusted her happiness to one who professed to be a disciple of Christ; a man esteemed by others, active in the cause of benevolence, who talked about doing good and spreading the gospel. He was well educated and intelligent; possessed many admirable traits of character, and was actuated by principle, but his mind only dwelt on large plans and extensive schemes. It never seemed to enter his thoughts that he must be patient, long-suffering and kind. His prayers were for showers of grace, and not for the gentle dew. The wife of his choice had been nursed in the lap of luxury, and accustomed to every indulgence; with a gifted mind and amiable disposition, she possessed humble piety, but had never been taught the duties of a wife; had never dreamed but of happiness, nor expected any thing but the attention her childhood experienced.

The style of living which the ample fortune of her father made proper, could not be reasonably kept up with the small income she must henceforth depend upon, and yet she

knew not how to live in any other way. Mr. A—— had been educated according to the maxims of the old school, and wished to live within his means, and lay by a portion for age and unforeseen misfortune, which desire was certainly not to be condemned. But he did not once think it his duty kindly to state his wishes, and by conciliation and plain reasons to win her judgment, and thereby her compliance. Bitter sarcasm and cold neglect were the measures he took to show his disapprobation of what he considered useless forms and ceremonies.

Cutting reproaches in the presence of others, were employed to reprove her who was willing to learn, but had no one to teach her; but who was not willing to yield unconditional submission to requests which were never defined. Frankness was a stranger to their intercourse, affection was blighted, and wretchedness was the inmate of each bosom. Their children grew up to despise the father for his criminal neglect, to condemn the mother for her unyielding temper, and happiness never smiled in that household. How much

might a little regard to trifles have effected ; a little more submission on the one side, and consideration of the force of habit and early education, with plain but gentle requisitions on the other, and the united prayers of both for guidance and assistance in all the little duties of life.

Another connexion was formed under nearly the same circumstances, but hearts were united in which grace had wrought a more effectual work. A man of stern character, keenly alive to a sense of the ridiculous, and accustomed to the expression of sarcasm and contempt, has assumed the loveliest appearance of Christian mildness ; no trace of any unholy passion or evil propensity, can be discovered. Though once entertaining views which a woman would consider no wise flattering to her sex, a wife receives every mark of attention ; confidence is repaid with confidence, kind requests are kindly complied with, and peace ever dwells beneath that roof. What is the cause ? Religious principle is acted upon even in *little things*. Nothing is considered trifling that affects the

temper, leads to irritability, or casts a shadow over the countenances that should beam with cheerfulness. The morning prayer is the prayer for assistance during every movement of the day, that every thought of the heart may be right, and every word spoken in the fear of God.

It is not by any great sacrifice that most of us are called to glorify our Father in heaven. It is by performing with cheerfulness the every day duties of life. The events which transpire within one household, are seldom made public, but on those who witness them there their influence is powerful indeed, and who can calculate the extent of that influence, when carried forth and spread abroad in the world?

The brother who has heard a sister publicly and solemnly promise to renounce the world, and yet finds her ready to engage in any gay amusement in preference to attending the social prayer-meeting and Bible class, may refrain from reproaching her, but will not fail to pronounce the religion which she professes but a name.

The mother who entreats her son to give his heart early to the Lord, and tells him of the blessed peace the gospel affords, but continually exhibits before him ebullitions of passion, and repines at every slight misfortune, will not very deeply impress upon the mind a belief in the peace-giving power of the faith she recommends.

The ungodly and worldly-minded man, who has read enough of the Bible to know it requires us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and cannot enter his house without hearing some tale of slander, and being annoyed by the bickerings and strifes which envy and malice produce, will not be induced to seek a religion which yields no better fruits in those who profess to be governed by its precepts.

A young lady will not, by spending Sabbath morning in her closet with her Bible, recommend the gospel to an unbelieving domestic, whose multiplied duties keep her from church, whom the "Sunday dinner" even prevents from opening a book of any kind, for more than half God's holy day.

She may now and then warn her of her danger, if she does not repent and believe, but would she not prove the sincerity of her love for souls, by cheerfully rendering the assistance which would enable every member of the household to spend a little time by herself, and be ready at an early hour, without distraction, to take her seat in the sanctuary? If either must be kept at home, surely she who has so many opportunities of mental and spiritual improvement, can better dispense with the morning service, than one who has no other means of grace. Let her see, at least, that the interest of those around her is not manifested in words alone. If she cannot be induced to attend the Sabbath school, let it not be her excuse that she has no time to prepare for the recitation, and no one to assist her in the necessary study.

How has my heart ached for those whose toil seems never to have an end; to whom the Sabbath morning brings no change, no quiet hour, nor promise of a day of rest; to whom the Sabbath bell seems not a cheerful

sound, but only another voice to remind them that they must toil on, to administer to the sensuality of their merciless employers. The only day, on which they would ask to share the gifts which God freely gave to all, the fresh air and the warm sun, brings no such blessings to them.

It was one of the seals of Christ's ministry, that the poor should have the gospel preached to them, but how many in this Christian land, seldom hear the gospel's joyful sound! I cannot prove the truth of the assertion, though I doubt it not, for by many have I been told, that in Christian New England, there is a church into which the poor are not permitted to enter. At least none are offered a seat within those splendid walls, who are not "clothed in purple and fine linen," and who do not "fare sumptuously every day."

And one would judge from the appearance of those who assemble to commemorate the dying love of the meek and lowly Saviour, that the apostle had said, "Let your adorning *be* that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, wearing of gold, and putting on of ap-

parel, and *not* the hidden man of the heart ; in that which *is corruptible*, instead of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price."

Very devoutly do these worshippers seem to listen to the services, devoutly prepared, but "God looketh on the heart." May they never lift up their eyes "being in torment," and ask of the poor outcasts, whom they despise, "a drop of cold water to cool their parching tongues!" Little did the pilgrim think, when he landed on this "rock-bound coast," that on its soil would ever be reared a temple like this ; "never did his" *gloomiest fears* "stretch onward to an hour like this!"

In many city churches, it is the custom for the poor to be set apart from the rest of the congregation, and, perhaps, no more effectual course could be taken to banish them from the house of God. The domestic is not admitted to the pew of her mistress, but a place is provided for her, if she choose to attend the same worship, in some obscure part of the house. It is called a weak and a wicked pride which prevents her accepting the offer,

and prompts her to stay away rather than be subjected to what she considers a humiliating distinction. It may be, and certainly is, very wrong for her to refuse to go up to the sanctuary, under whatever circumstances she may be called to enter the sacred place ; but what kind of pride is it which inflates the Christian's bosom, when she seems to sit beside those of low degree, and blushes with confusion to see her rich and rustling robes in near contrast with those of modest hue ? Where is her willingness to become all things to all men, that at least some may be saved ?

Christ commands those who made feasts, to go out into the highways and hedges, and bring in the blind, and the poor, and the lame ; and how is his command obeyed ? Not only are they excluded from feasts, but shunned in the place where God especially comes to meet his people, and delights to hear the prayer of the lowliest disciple !

Those who have never learned the value of the pearl of great price, cannot be expected to leave all and go in search of it. Those who have never learned to love the blessed

truths of the gospel of peace, will not consider it their duty to bear insult and degradation, if necessary, in order to listen to the word.

It is for the Christian to imitate the example of his Master and go about doing good. It is for him to bear humiliation and reproach,—to suffer persecution and death, whilst earnestly seeking the glory of the crucified Redeemer.

Is not wealth often considered a greater accession to the church, than the humble disciple of Jesus? Are not the treasures of the rich more valued than the prayers of the poor? The widow's mite may bring the blessing of Heaven, while the golden gains of the ungodly may prove a withering curse.

In these days of change,—of undermining and overturning, there seems to be nothing safe, however time-honored or sacred, from the assaults of the reckless revolutionist. To be free from all restraint is his aim, and to accomplish it, every obstacle must be removed or crushed that comes in his way. A war of extermination, seems to be commenced against every revered custom, no matter by what authority it has been established.

“What better is a man,” it is sarcastically asked, “for having the hands of others placed upon his head?” Sacrilegious as it seems, may it not, with equal propriety, be asked, what good is gained by the performance of the rite of baptism? or what benefit by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper? Is it not enough that these ordinances were instituted by the blessed Saviour when he sent forth his disciples to preach the gospel to all creatures, and commanded them to be observed? Is it not enough for those who pretend not to be wise above what is written, that the Holy Ghost said, “Separate me Barnabas and Paul, for the work whereunto I have called them; and when they had fasted, and prayed, and *laid their hands on them*, they sent them away.” This ceremony was performed by “prophets and teachers,” and this custom was observed by all the primitive churches. Order is Heaven’s first law. How can any one who has seen the necessity of regularity in the daily avocations of life, advocate the abolition of all regard to it in public stations? Nothing can be accomplished in one small

household without system, laws, and penalties too, for disobedience; and I have ever found that those who would abolish all law and order in nations, and communities, were most tenacious of their limited authority, and required the most absolute submission to their decrees, and the most unconditional assent to their opinions, from all over whom they could exert jurisdiction.

The impressive service of ordination cannot but have a deep and salutary effect on all who witness it; how much more on him who is thus set apart for a holy office. How can one deliberately, from base and trifling motives determine to pass through these solemn ceremonies, to enter upon duties still more sacred!

The children of Israel were required to observe the passover through all generations, that they might keep in remembrance how their fathers were brought up out of Egypt. The Christian, when sitting at the table of his Lord, cannot help recurring to the parting interview of Jesus with his disciples.

Particular and established observances in

commemoration of events, have been instituted among all nations, and found effectual in transmitting to succeeding generations a knowledge of the events themselves, and a vivid impression of the circumstances under which they transpired.

I never heard any contempt expressed concerning the practice of "keeping Thanksgiving," the merry festival of New England, though by some the day set apart for fasting and prayer to remind us of a more sad event, and of our dependence, is considered absurd and foolish.

We are, now and then, reminded by the "booming cannon" and the "pealing drum," of all the "pomp and circumstance of war,"—of the "days that tried men's souls,"—of those who "fought, and in their country's cause bled nobly." It must be with mingled feeling of pain and pleasure, that we think of our fathers and their "deeds of valor."

Believing as I do, that war is at variance with the precepts and principles of the gospel of peace, I cannot, with some, unconditionally condemn those who thought

it their duty to take up arms in self-defence, —who, with the purest motives, offered their lives a sacrifice for freedom. They lived in an age when all were taught that it was a duty for individuals to die for a nation's liberty. In no other cause would their swords have been unsheathed, and if they were living now, I doubt not, they would refuse to stain their souls with human blood. Some are ready to say, "the Bible was in their hands, and how could they misinterpret its plain and practical truths?" But the same persons are not as ready to say of the thief and the murderer, "they have the Bible open before them, and there is no excuse nor palliation for their crime." It is unaccountable, and yet not to be disputed, that nations are enlightened progressively. For eighteen centuries, men have been blessed with the whole Bible, and how slow have they been in conforming their lives to its pure precepts.

I cannot feel that Washington was a "cold blooded murderer," when doing what he sincerely believed to be his duty. Where will be found the history of another man

whose life can compare with his in purity? Who ever passed through so many various scenes of trial, temptation and responsibility, with a character so spotless, that neither friend nor foe could find aught of which to accuse him? Not among the records of men do we know of one for whom we have so deep a reverence. Some have doubted his piety, but I cannot believe a man like Washington, always so sincere, so conscientious, so unaccustomed to act without weighing well his motives, would have been a constant communicant at the Lord's table, without being as sure as man can be, that he was not eating and drinking unworthily. He was not accustomed to taking superficial views of things, and must have known why it was instituted. He would not have listened to the pure doctrines and solemn service of an evangelical church, without being settled in his belief. Through all his correspondence, in war and in peace, his entire dependence on God is humbly expressed, and seems never to be forgotten. He was in the daily habit of reading the Bible in his closet and praying

in secret. What, but the grace of God, and "prayer without ceasing," could have preserved him so pure in thought, word, and deed?

There have been many who have been lovely in their lives and peaceful in death, who have expressly said that they expected thus to merit eternal happiness; but not a syllable to this effect is recorded of Washington, nor in any published document or epistle does he express such a sentiment. He was not in the habit of talking of himself, nor revealing his bosom thoughts, except to his wife, and none of his conversation or correspondence with her is preserved. But she resigned him to death without a fear concerning his preparation for the solemn change. She was eminently pious, and a model for her sex in every Christian and feminine virtue.

But love of country is considered by some modern philanthropists, as an unholy passion, unworthy of a Christian bosom.

We ought, it is maintained, to feel the same anxiety for those far out of the reach of our beneficence, as for those immediately

under our influence. What agony would torture us continually, were we to feel as keenly for the wretchedness of a sufferer in some distant island, as for him whom we can watch over and relieve. But he who denies that patriotism is ever kindled in his bosom, and professes to diffuse his love equally over the habitable globe, is constantly reverting to the "scenes of his childhood." And who does not enjoy his happiness, who would check his enthusiasm? What is love of country, but an expansion of the love of home?

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For they that carried us away captive, required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Though this love has never since been sung in strains so sweet, there is not a heart that does not throb when dwelling on this touching scene, and the holy sentiment is all our own as we revert to the land where our fathers died. The words of the sweet Psalmist have fallen from the lips of every wanderer from his native clime; and who would have his bosom chilled by extinguishing a flame which God has lighted, and which ever burns so pure and bright? I cannot help acknowledging that I am proud of our nation's glory and her bright renown. I rejoice to see her first among the nations of the earth in enlightened principles of government, in pure philanthropy and Christian benevolence. There are many dark stains on her bosom, but "with all her faults I love her still."

The Irish Catholics are not sent to our shores to be trampled in the dust, but to be elevated, enlightened, and blest. The cause of the still more degraded African should enlist the wisdom of all Christian people among whom he dwells, for bitter indeed must be the tears he sheds, as his

thoughts return to the land where the cocoa waves, and he longs to see again the golden sands of his sunny clime. The lone Indian is driven onward and onward, "o'er mountain and river, through forest and dell," and dark, dark is the history of his wrongs.

How much more shall I rejoice, when our escutcheon is spotless as the sun, and our star-spangled banner may float without mockery in the gentle zephyrs of the South and the pure breeze of the West.

Not till responsibility is felt, and accountability deeply realized in the secluded homes of her wide stretching valleys, can our country expect to see her "sons grow up as plants in their youth, and her daughters polished after the similitude of a palace."

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